

LOCATION: **AUSTIN, TX**

REPORT(S): **Environmental Effects of the Single Use Bag Ordinance (2015)**

## ORDINANCE SUMMARY

**Passed: 2012 / Implemented: 2013**

**Ordinance No. :** 20120301-078 Chapter 15-6

### PLASTIC SUMMARY:

- Bans plastic bags that are less than 4.0 mil thick
- Plastic bags must be 4.0 mil or thicker to be considered “reusable”
- Must be recyclable

### PAPER SUMMARY:

- No fee on paper bags
- Paper bags must contain recycled content
- Paper bags must be recyclable

## ORDINANCE ASSESSMENT

### KEY FINDINGS:

- Reduced Number of Plastic Bags by 75%<sup>1</sup> (pg. 13, Table 3)
- In Austin, Texas thin (less than 4 mil.) plastic bag use has decreased by 75%, however the amount of plastic in the waste stream has changed very little as people are disposing of the thicker “reusable” (4 mil.) bags at a higher rate. <sup>1</sup> (pg. 19-20)
- In 2015, reusable (4.0 mil.) plastic bags accounted for 23 tons of plastic in the waste stream, equivalent to the nearly 2 million (197,079,454) thin (1 mil.) plastic bags removed from the waste stream since 2013.(pg. 24)
- A store in Austin has reported losing \$60,000 to \$70,000 per week in revenue as a result of customers choosing to shop at a store that provides single-use carryout bags.<sup>1</sup> (pg. 27)

## RESOURCES

<sup>1</sup>Austin Resource Recovery & The Zero Waste Advisory Commission, *Environmental Effects of the Single Use Bag Ordinance in Austin, Texas*. Austin, TX: Aaron Waters, 2015.

**Austin, TX Carryout Bag Ordinance:** [LINK TO ORDINANCE](#)

**Environmental Effects of the Single Use Bag Ordinance in Austin Texas:** [LINK TO REPORT](#)